

CONFIDENTIAL.]

REPORT

[No. 22 of 1878.]

ON

NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 1st June 1878.

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

| No. | Names of Newspapers. | Place of publication. | Number of copies issued. | Dates of papers received and examined for the week. | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| BENGALI. | | | | | |
| Monthly. | | | | | |
| 1 | "Bhārat Shramjibī" | Barāhanagar | 4,000 | Vol. V, No. 2, for the month of Jyaistha 1285 B.S. | |
| 2 | "Rajshahye Sambād" | Rajshahye ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 3 | "Grāmbārtā Prakāshikā" | Comercolly | 200 | | |
| 4 | "Arya Pratibhā" | Bhowanipore ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 5 | "Suhrid" | Calcutta ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| Bi-monthly. | | | | | |
| 6 | "Culna Prakāsh" | Culna | | 23rd May 1878. 31st ditto. 29th ditto. 28th ditto. 26th ditto. 24th ditto. 29th ditto. 25th ditto. 22nd ditto. 24th ditto. 24th ditto. 18th April 1878. 26th May 1878. 27th ditto. 25th ditto. | |
| 7 | "Hindu Lalanā" | Nawabgunge, Barrack-pore. ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 8 | "Sahayogī" | Bhawānīpore, Calcutta ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| Weekly. | | | | | |
| 9 | "Banga Hitaishi" | Bhowanipore ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 10 | "Bhārat Mihir" | Mymensingh | 658 | | |
| 11 | "Bhārat Sanskarak" | Calcutta ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 12 | "Bengal Advertiser" | Ditto ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 13 | "Bishwa Dūt" | Tāligunj, Calcutta ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 14 | "Burdwan Prachārikā" | Burdwan | 165 | | |
| 15 | "Burdwan Sangivani" | Ditto ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 16 | "Dacca Prakāsh" | Dacca | 400 | | |
| 17 | "Education Gazette" | Hooghly | 1,168 | | |
| 18 | "Grāmbārtā Prakāshikā" | Comercolly | 200 | | |
| 19 | "Hindu Hitaishini" | Dacca | 300 | | |
| 20 | "Hindu Ranjikā" | Beauleah, Rajshahye... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 21 | "Murshidabad Pratinidhi" | Berhampore ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 22 | "Pratikār" | Ditto | 235 | | |
| 23 | "Rungpore Dik Prakāsh" | Kākiniā, Rungpore | 250 | | |
| 24 | "Sādhārani" | Chinsurah | 516 | | |
| 25 | "Sahachara" | Calcutta ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 26 | "Sambād Bhāskar" | Ditto ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 27 | "Sulabha Samāchār" | Ditto | 5,500 | | |
| 28 | "Soma Prakāsh" | Bhawānīpore | 700 | | |
| Bi-weekly. | | | | | |
| 29 | "Banga Mitra" | Calcutta | 4,000 | | |
| Daily. | | | | | |
| 30 | "Sambād Prabhākar" | Calcutta | 550 | | |
| 31 | "Sambād Purnachandrodaya" | Ditto ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 32 | "Samāchār Chandrikā" | Ditto | 625 | | |
| 33 | "Banga Vidyā Prakāshikā" | Ditto ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| 34 | "Arya Mihir" | Ditto ... .. | ..... |  |  |
| ENGLISH AND BENGALI. | | | | | |
| Weekly. | | | | | |
| 35 | "Howrah Hitakari" | Bethar, Howrah | 300 | 26th May 1878. | |
| 36 | "Murshidabad Patrikā" | Berhampore | | 24th ditto. | |
| 37 | "Burrisal Bārtābaha" | Burrisal | 300 | | |
| ENGLISH AND URDU. | | | | | |
| 38 | "Urdu Guide" | Calcutta | 400 | 25th ditto. | |
| URDU. | | | | | |
| Bi-monthly. | | | | | |
| 39 | "Akhbār-ul-Akhiār" | Mozufferpore | | | |
| HINDI. | | | | | |
| Weekly. | | | | | |
| 40 | "Behār Bandhu" | Bankipore, Patna | 509 | 29th ditto. | |
| PERSIAN. | | | | | |
| 41 | "Jām-Jahān-numā" | Calcutta | 250 | | |

POLITICAL.

HINDU RANJIKÁ,
May 22nd, 1878.

THE *Hindu Ranjiká*, writing with reference to the correspondence passing between the Sovereigns of England and Russia, is led to conclude that peace is probable, and prays God it may quickly come. Notwithstanding the objections for various reasons raised by Sir George Campbell and Mr. Forsyth against the despatch of the Indian Contingent, the fact will prove the great confidence which the people of India have in the English Government, who must now admit that the natives are fond of British rule.

HINDU HITASHINI,
May 26th, 1878.

2. The *Howrah Hitakari*, writing of England's power, says there is no doubt she was the leading power during the Peninsular and French wars, and in the

Crimean war of 1855 she proved herself superior to Russia; but latterly her passiveness and neutrality during the Franco-German and Russo-Turkish wars have led people to infer that, having amassed wealth, like Carthage of old, she had become weak and less able to protect herself; and if anything has tended to confirm this opinion, it was her abstention from aiding the Turks. The fact, however, is that England is not really weak, and that she has not her equal in power; so that there is no reason to entertain a dread about the half-civilized Russian.

BHARAT MIHIR,
May 23rd, 1878.

3. The *Bhārat Mihir* endorses the statement of the *Sylhet Prakash* that the Native Press in former times feared to bring to light half of the injustice and oppression practised in the mofussil, and since the passing of Act IX their mouths have been closed entirely. No one dares to say or speak aught against the Magistrates and other district officers, who are all fast friends led by the Magistrate. There would be no hope for a feeble Editor of a native paper, or a Bengali, who would venture to expose them. The writer adds—We have known Magistrates and Joint-Magistrates whose justice and capability of work and benevolent desires might be held up as a pattern; but through the ill-fortune of the country and the Government, of these there are only a few. We write it with regret, and with no other object than the good of the Government and the country. The welfare of the mofussil depends on the Magistrate. In the eyes of the people he is the Government; and it is desirable that between him and them there should be a friendly relation and mutual confidence and affection. Every step the Magistrate takes is regarded with suspicion. If we are asked the reason of the present dissatisfaction in the country, among other causes we should point to the want of a healthy relationship between the Magistrate and the people. We have often asked ourselves the cause of this estrangement. That the Magistrate, who belongs to a class of educated and experienced men, should voluntarily seek to produce such a state of feeling, or practise what is wrong, we cannot believe. Large interests are entrusted to him, and he knows his duty to the people. District Judges are not commonly regarded with such distrust; and yet both officers are chosen from the same class, and many who are now Judges have been Magistrates. Then why are these not objects of esteem? We confess our inability to answer the question, and ask the Government to look into it. Some men of high moral character have not only awakened confidence and happiness in the minds of the people, but have even by their gentle manners removed unhappy impressions. But these are few. Still, when we see such men, we cannot blame the system.

After having governed the country for more than a hundred years, the Government now thinks it necessary to give Magistrates and others large executive powers. Had they been gods, it were different; but they are men, and a large increase of power is likely to lead them to forget themselves;

and it is this that we regard as the chief cause of this unpleasantness. That injustice and wrong are practised we cannot deny; but specific acts we cannot attempt to mention through fear of the Press Act; yet we have ventured to let Government know the state of the public mind as noticed by ourselves. Dissatisfaction can never be put down by disregarding the opinions of the public. Government cannot see how far its laudable intentions fail of their effects; for sometimes they go no farther than the paper on which they have been written, leaving people to be disappointed of the hopes they entertained. We do not mean to say that Government should carry on its administration dependent *altogether* on public opinion, yet it might be done to a much greater degree than at present, when it would be seen that three-fourths of the present causes of dissatisfaction would vanish. We have steadily refrained from writing much through fear of the law, so that Government is in the dark. Suppose that the Magistrate works with high aims, but the people are under the impression that he is doing them evil—where are the good results of the administration?

4. The same paper notices that, while superior officers are frequently transferred from place to place, there are others who are detained too long in one station; and he thinks the system of frequent removals should be made applicable to all public officers.

BHARAT MIHIR,
May 23rd, 1878.

5. The *Education Gazette* informs its readers of the duties that will devolve on Mr. Lethbridge as Press Commissioner. This appointment manifests Lord Lytton's nobleness of views; for though he passed the Vernacular Press Act, he desires that the Native Press should so conduct itself as not to incur the penalties of the Act. The Press must be considered as one of the several members of the body politic of which the British Government does not wish to lose sight.

EDUCATION GAZETTE,
May 24th, 1878.

6. The *Education Gazette*, writing of the memorial forwarded to the Lieutenant-Governor by some of the ryots of the sub-division of Serajgunge against the Sanyals, zamindars of the Salap village, remarks, that the charges embodied therein are very serious, both as against the Sanyal zamindars, and the employees of themselves and of Government. There is no doubt His Honor will make a thorough and searching investigation into the matter. Government spared no efforts to put down these disturbances in 1872-73, and matters seemed to mend; yet there still lurked an ill-feeling between the parties, whom every one seems desirous to see reconciled, that thus the country and themselves may be saved from ruin. They do not appear to understand their mutual relations; hence their frequent resort to law. The zamindars and their amlahs are avaricious and exacting on the one hand, while the ryots, on the other, spare no means to evade payment of rent. To rectify this some efficient law is required. The Bill this year introduced by the Hon'ble Kristodas Pal into the Legislative Council is directed towards the removal of these monster evils. He has, with the view of eliciting the opinions of the public, purposely refrained from having it passed into law during the session just concluded.

EDUCATION GAZETTE.

7. The *Murshedabad Patriká*, while approving the justice of the sentence passed on the Rájá of Pooree, thinks that the natives of Bengal and Orissa should unite in presenting a petition to the Government to remit his sentence.

MURSHIDABAD
PATRIKA,
May 24th, 1878.

8. The same paper, referring to the appointment of Mr. Lethbridge as Press Commissioner, thinks that the measure might secure better feeling between the

MURSHIDABAD
PATRIKA.

Government and the Vernacular Press. At the same time he scarcely sees the need of it. He objects, too, to the sum which will necessarily be expended in connection with the appointment.

HINDU HITAIISHINI,
May 25th, 1878.

9. The *Hindu Hitaiishini* remarks that its predictions, as to the result of employing men on small salaries to ascertain what persons are liable to pay the license tax,

Mode of collecting license tax.

have been amply verified. An enumerator on Rs. 15 a month, it is reported, had, in concert with the *pancháyat*, received a small bribe to take the names of certain persons off the list. The post of enumerator has since been abolished by the Board, and circle officers have been appointed instead, who, it is hoped, will not be allowed to consult the opinions of the village *pancháyat*, but receive only such aid from them as will suffice to show the condition and income of the people. Parties constituting the village *pancháyat* are for the most part self-interested, and have their likes and dislikes; the tax itself is a burden; and it would not do to add to the burden by bringing in the *pancháyat*; better by far if the old men of the village were consulted, who could give the most correct information to the circle officers regarding those who are liable to pay the tax.

SULABH SAMACHARA,
May 25th, 1878.

10. The *Sulabh Samachar* says: If there has been a diminution of loyalty among the natives of the country, it would be well to enquire into the reason, and

English civilization and loyalty.

among what class this disaffection appears. Since English education has opened the eyes of the natives, who have taken for their example English dispositions, characters, habits and customs, it is not surprising to see the loyalty of their native pupils partake of much the same character as their own. When by irreligious instruction, and by the evil example of some infidel and immoral professors, superintendents, and teachers of some of our schools and colleges, and by the perusal of books supporting atheistical sentiments, the minds of our youths become devoid of devotion to God, religion, or moral principles, then how can loyalty to their teachers or rulers exist any longer? It has sometimes been stated that the pupils of our schools and colleges are not instructed in good manners, and know not how to show respect to the chief officers of the State. Is not this the fault of the teacher? The minds of children are like soft clay, which can be moulded into any form. How then can they be to blame? If they from childhood receive good moral instruction, and have good examples before them, they will certainly turn out to be good men; but the very nature of their instruction tends to dry up the roots of religious morals; whence then will loyalty, good manners and morals come? If by science and civilization the root of religion and morals be removed, who will say that this globe will not at one time be thrown into anarchy? We know that among our rulers, who reproach our countrymen with ingratitude and disaffection, there are those whose example has led to infidelity and irreligion. To destroy religion and morality, and at the same time to make all men loyal, is impossible. Though a man might fear God, and a recollection of his attributes might draw tears from his eyes, yet who could long remain loyal when he reads Mr. Mills' atheistic works and his godless moral instructions? If social ties, love and good-will bound the race of our rulers to their people, the latter would feel some affection for their virtues and be somewhat submissive; but where is that? When there are no feelings in common, what hope can there be of pure loyalty? Of fear, dread, covetousness, and self-interest there is plenty; and those who are conscientious and pious, confess that they love the Queen from their hearts. If it be wished to cultivate a loyalty void of all hypocrisy, then the elements of religion, morals, God, a future state, distinction between sin

and holiness, and the existence of conscience, should find a place in our system of instruction. The seeds of those truths might in various ways be sown in the hearts of pupils without having recourse to direct religious instruction. Our rulers possess so much understanding, and can enter into so many subjects; and are they not able to comprehend the natural tendencies of human nature? Europeans are Christians, and live in civilized society in Christian families, and in various ways receive moral instruction. In the history of their race, such excellent institutions of long standing exist, as by their own influence impart excellent lessons; here the *schools* for the most part are looked to. If these schools serve only to increase the body of unbelieving atheists, it is difficult to say at what state society will at length arrive. English education and civilization should be so blended together as to expel all such faults. Then loyalty, good manners, and morals will of themselves increase; else from the way in which infidelity is manifesting itself, it will be difficult indeed to keep ordinary morals together. On account of the influence which infidelity exercises in the chief places of Europe, the sovereign authority is slighted. Such sentiments are by means of the sciences promulgated, as cause sedition and infidelity to sink down into the bones. If the minds of the subjects are so turned, who will preserve the peace of the kingdom? True, Government professes to act on the principles of religion. They are gradually becoming more hollow within. A man may profess the established religion of the ruling power, but his instructions, example, and actions are seen to lead into paths of infidelity. Separate the trunk from the roots, and then pour water over the upper part of it, is a subject that needs careful consideration.

11. The *Dacca Prakásh*, referring to the recent memorial presented by the ryots of *Serájgunge* to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, remarks that the misdeeds and acts of oppression set forth in the petition (a copy of which is printed) are of a serious character; especially where the Magistrate and police are accused of not helping to tranquilize matters.

DACCA PRAKASH,
May 26th, 1878.

12. The *Dacca Prakásh*, with reference to the recent circular of Mr. Cockerell, asks our just Government calmly to consider whether the Native Editors in their writings have or have not had the welfare of the kingdom, the sovereign, and the people in view; whether they have or have not given friendly advice to Government in matters tending to the better administration of the affairs of the country; and lastly, whether, in publishing the faults of Government, they have not done so with a heart void of all malice. We have become much terrified to see ourselves put down as seditious and dissatisfied by that same wise and discriminating British Government to which we are so partial, and for whose permanence we are always desirous, and to unfurl whose standards in foreign lands our countrymen have not hesitated to devote their lives and to cross the ocean.

DACCA PRAKASH.

13. The *Howrah Hitakarí* gives a brief sketch of the British constitution, and in writing of the East India Company, says that the government of India was entrusted to the Company because the independence-loving yet king-fearing Parliament dreaded lest the King might secure too much power for himself through it, and also because, in governing the country through another body, a better administration would follow, as the Company would always have before it the fear of Parliament, and would therefore guard against acts of injustice or oppression. This is just the case with reference to the collection of rents in Bengal by the *zamindar*, and in the North-West and Bombay by the Government direct, where the oppression in the former is

HOWRAH HITAKARI,
May 26th, 1878.

less than that in the latter, because the zamindár has a fear of an authority superior to himself, but the Government has no one to care for, much less fear. Be this as it may, the critical period, in dread anticipation of which Parliament placed India for so long a time under the Company, has now arrived. The Editor next proceeds to lay before his readers a brief *résumé* of the discussions going on in England about the expediency and propriety, or otherwise, of troops being ordered from India for active service in Europe; and takes occasion to remark that the matter is a very serious one indeed, in which is involved the future weal or woe of India. At all events, India will be no small gainer by having its administrative affairs thus prominently brought before Parliament; our rulers here will act more cautiously both in matters of expenditure and administration. Be it advantageous to us in a greater or less degree, at all events England will be a great gainer. Imagine for a moment that twenty-five years hence a powerful, place-seeking, ambitious ruler like Charles the First seated on the throne. He might not be able to endure the sight of a Parliament, while his great desire might be that England should remain under his sole and undivided control; and if of India too he be the sole master, he might take away troops from here easily to carry out his selfish projects in England. With such a possible state of affairs in view what ought England to do?

SADHARANÍ,
May 26th, 1878.

14. The *Sadharaní*, of the 26th May, requests us to translate six articles in full; and trusts that the Government will see that his statements are reasonable. We give the substance of them. The first article is headed, "Without discontent, there can be no advancement." He notices that some years ago, when the income tax was the third time imposed, a Deputy Magistrate, who was made assessor in a certain district, observing that, when he went into a village, the people were so terror-stricken that they either fled into some distant village, or refused to come out of their houses, drew up a statement of this and other like matters, and submitted it to the Commissioner of the division; adding that, although there were but few liable to the tax, yet there was a very general dissatisfaction, attributable in a great measure to the newspapers. Many days after, this appeared in a leading paper in England, and occasioned a great stir. Many of the native papers were hurt, and poured out abuses on the Deputy Baboo. The *Hindu Patriot* alone said, that there was much truth in the Deputy's statement, but this should not be a cause of grief. The ignorant and poor of our country are in a state so devoid of life, that their sense of pain is almost destroyed, and if the native papers could infuse into them any sense of feeling, it is only what they ought to do. These words of the *Patriot* are full of meaning. If any kind of reasonable dissatisfaction could be infused into the minds of the general class of peasants, it would be no fault. Where there is a desire of advancement, there will be dissatisfaction; and unless this can be produced in a peasant's mind, no one could raise him. If a ruler then seeks the advancement of his subjects, he will not be grieved at any discontent they might show, but will seek to remove the causes of it.

SADHARANÍ.

15. The second article is headed "A ruler will devise liberal methods to ascertain this dissatisfaction." On this the Editor observes that, when the English became rulers here, they sought the advancement of the people. They found them careless, voiceless; they afterwards gave them the advantages of education, and after many days these dumb people found their tongues, and their generous rulers encouraged them to make known their opinions freely; and the common peasant of India began to tread the path of freedom; and now, though all other traces of British civilization should pass away, yet the education they have imparted, and the full freedom which they accorded to make known their opinions, has crowned them with a fame which shall be

recorded in the pages of history in letters of gold. With the path to freedom opened to them came the publication of newspapers. These were well-wishers of both rulers and ruled, and endeavored at once to meet the two principal wants in the kingdom—(1) the absence of a desire for progress, or dissatisfaction, (2) the absence of any opportunity on the part of the rulers to know the story of this dissatisfaction. These papers began to lead the people to seek for true happiness: they infused into their minds some small degree of dissatisfaction, and then began to tell the rulers of this dissatisfaction and implore them to remove the causes of it. And so they continued to do till this new Act was passed, and were a help to both parties.

The third article is headed, "This dissatisfaction will continue though the newspapers cease to exist." The writer then refers to seasons of drought and famine, which were never so frequent as within the last seventeen or eighteen years. These are traced to three causes—first, a special infliction by Nature; second, a continual waste of money by a want of consideration on the part of the rulers; third, our own incurable laziness, whatever may be the cause. Rice, which is the life of myriads, has become very dear. Man need not be taught disaffection any longer; all cry aloud on all sides from the pangs of hunger; and though the English and Bengali papers cease to exist, the cry will be the same.

The fourth article is headed, "The expression of this dissatisfaction is clearly seen in the literature of the country." Here the writer refers to various forms of disease which prevail. Cholera found its way here under English rule: and our old acquaintance, fever, has assumed an epidemic form, and desolates several tracts of country. With the spread of education, and instructions in, and opportunities of, deciding upon the merits of the administration of the State, while men gloried in their desires of advancement, they are now laid aside by disease and the complaint is loud. These distresses are traced, as he had said before, to three causes—the chastisements of Providence, the faults of the rulers, and their own idleness.

Inhabitants of India, who used formerly to esteem their rulers above their gods in this world, are now ready to detect faults in their various operations. Natives of India, who for a long time believed themselves the most noble of all races, now reproach themselves as being worse than uncivilized and barbarous savages. In all the Bengali periodicals the three causes of distress above referred to are dwelt upon. When they write of the policy of Government, it is to desire the rulers not to be partial to the Manchester merchants, and not to squander the money of India upon public works and the expenses of the army. If they aim at social reforms, they reproach themselves by abusing clerks in the public offices, shouting the encomiums of the Baboos, eulogizing asses; and such things as these show uneasiness, anguish, and pain of heart. British policy has led them to understand their own difficulties, and they have consequently become exceedingly agitated, afraid, distressed, and unsettled.

The fifth article is headed, "The rulers are very earnest to remove the troubles of their subjects." Although our gracious Empress may not yet comprehend the extent of our difficulties, the English rulers know them well. In the Behar famine, the very liberal resolution was formed that not one should die of hunger. The people were saved; but large quantities of grain were destroyed, and large sums of money wasted. The burden of meeting that large sum, or of paying the interest on it for ever, must fall on the people. The press cried out on their behalf; the rulers were alarmed. Then followed the famines in the Deccan and the North-West, in which care was taken not to spend too much; but numerous lives were lost. At length a Commission has been appointed to devise liberal means for the prevention of famines. Our English rulers are therefore alive to the distress

of the natives, and both in India and in England are devising means to alleviate it.

The sixth article is headed "Special anxiety is shown to deter the natives from agitating their grievances." In this he says that, while Government is busy in concerting bold and liberal measures for the relief of the people, it is at the same time requiring that those who suffer should not have it whispered in their ears that Government is in a measure to blame for them ; it can be of no use, and might do more harm than good. The people are already pressed with the pangs of hunger ; and to say such things to them may excite sedition ; and a loss of wealth and life may follow ; and if Russia or some foreign enemy should seize the opportunity to make his appearance in arms, it will lead to much embarrassment. Say what you have to say in a language unintelligible to the people ; only do not tell them that Government is in any measure the cause of their distresses. Hence we admit that constantly attributing sorrows to one agent may lead to grave results, but do not think it was necessary to pass the Vernacular Press Act and earnestly ask for its repeal. The reasons given are—

1stly.—The papers do not say the rulers alone are to blame ; they often blame zamindars and mahajans also, who in the estimation of the masses have no superior.

2ndly.—The newspapers are not so widely circulated, nor have the village pathsalas produced results which would enable the one-sixteenth part of them to understand the papers. However it may be in Bombay and Central India,—in the Punjab, the North-West Provinces, Oudh, Bengal, Assam, and Orissa, it is not likely now, nor at least for the next twenty years, that the papers should incite any to rebellion.

3rdly.—The people of India in general have become so dull and spiritless, and the English Government have been so careful to deprive them of arms, and they are so naturally quiet and so much afraid of war, that it is improbable they should ever unite and rise against the English.

4thly.—If it had been necessary at certain times to prevent reports being circulated among the body of the people, there was no necessity for enacting so stringent a law. It would have been sufficient if special laws were passed for special cases.

SAHACHAR,
May 27th, 1878.

16. This paper reproves the *Amritá Bázár Patriká* for the article on the Pooree Rájá's case which was published in his last issue. The latter paper is warned to

be cautious in the tone and character of his articles, especially at the present time, when the Press Act is under the consideration of Parliament. In the recent case of Mr. Salt at Agra, when he was sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment, no English paper took up his cause or defended him. The Pooree Rájá is no fit object for pity. If such characters are supported by us, and held up as fit objects for our sympathy, foreigners will assuredly have a right to ask "what benefit or improvement the people of this country have derived from an English education."

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
May 28th, 1878.

17. The *Burdwan Sanjiváni*, in acknowledging receipt of the letter of the Government of Bengal, accompanied with a Bengali translation of the Press Act, says that feelings of joy and sorrow arose simultaneously in the Editor's breast ; joy, because Government has not shown that haste in carrying out the provisions of the Act which it did at the time of passing it into law ; sorrow, because on account of the language our thoughts have been distorted and we have been deemed guilty under the law. Be that

Mr. Cockerell's Circular and the Vernacular Press Act.

as it may, the good advice contained in the circular letter has quieted us, and the black clouds, charged with thunder and lightning, which were all this while hanging over our heads threatening destruction, have passed off, and the almost dead and terrified Editors have revived and are full of hope and life again. Government has acted the part of a real friend. Had it but done so before, its subjects would have had no cause to express their disapprobation, and the Editors would have been loud in praises. To draw by love is a thousand times better than working through fear; and we have often felt distressed at seeing Government fall into such errors. A letter like the present would have mended matters entirely. It is stated therein that the Act was passed on account of the seditious and disloyal writings of some of the newspapers. But we do not see the justice of punishing all for the sins of a few. We have all along been of opinion that no Vernacular paper is an out-and-out enemy of the English; for be the faults of the British Government ever so numerous, the blessings which it bestows on the people and country more than make up for all. We always pray from our heart for the continuance and prosperity of our Government. If, then, such be the feelings of the Editors of the papers, it was unjust, impolitic, and retrogressive to pass such an Act. We wish Government may come to see its error and repeal it. If any paper is proved to be transgressing, let it be punished under the Penal Code, or any other way the Government deems fit. With reference to Editors and disloyal writings, the Act does not enlighten us as to what kind of specific language may come under this heading; so that, if we ever err thus unwittingly, we hope Government will in its mercy and highmindedness and beneficence pardon our error.

18. This paper desires to investigate the matter as to whether it is right or not to allow public officers to collect subscriptions of any kind, be it for works of public utility, pleasure, or amusement. His own views are for various reasons opposed to it. Some might be led to subscribe through fear of displeasing the officer, and to avoid being subjected to inconvenience at some future time when they might have any business with him; also lest they should lose respect in the opinion of others. There are many too who are considered respectable, but on principle would not like to subscribe for sports or recreations. There are those too who wear an outward appearance of respectability, but whose families are in distress. Refusal on their part too might sometimes be met with tokens of anger. It is well known that there are many who give subscriptions to win suits or to serve some purpose of their own. It has been brought to our knowledge that, when a subscription has been refused, threats have been used; and it makes our blood run cold to think of what injustice may be done under the pretence of raising contributions.

19. In acknowledging the receipt of Mr. Cockerell's circular letter, the *Grámvárta Prakáshiká* considers its tenor to be somewhat re-assuring, and very different from that of the speeches in Council, when *all* the native papers were promiscuously blamed. Mr. Eden makes use of the sentence "all the papers are not in fault." Now, had this been done before, so much wailing would not have been heard.

20. The *Sangbad Prabhákar*, in referring to the conduct of the Dacca educated Bengalis burning Mahárájá Jotíndramohan Tagore in effigy for his not having opposed the Press Act in Council, attributes this to the absence of religious and moral education. In conclusion the Editor asks when Sir Ashley Eden and the Senate will become alive to the dreadful results of this absence of moral instruction.

GRAMVARTTA
PRAKASHIKA,
May 29th, 1878.

GRAMVARTTA
PRAKASHIKA.

SANGBAD
PRABHAKARA,
May 30th, 1878.

The danger of making Government officials the recipients of public subscriptions.

Mr. Cockerell's recent Circular letter and the Press Act.

Mahárájá Jotendromohan Tagore, and the Dacca pupils and University education.

Will the teachers and professors of the Dacca College take notice of this reprehensible conduct of their pupils and inflict proper chastisement on them for it?

SANGHAT
PRABHAKARA,
May 29th, 1878.

21. The *Sanghāt Prabhākara* believes that at no time in the previous history of India were honors and distinctions so profusely bestowed as during the present.

Europeans, natives, and females of both nationalities have been made the recipients of ribbons and stars. So far as honors go to stimulate energy and excite to good works, their bestowal is proper; yet it is to be regretted that the stimulus to do good caused by the grant of simple titles to the pundits of old has not had a like effect in modern times by the gift of higher and more expensive decorations. Among the number of recipients of honors as telegraphed by Reuter, we regret to see natives entirely excluded. Surely there are many amongst our countrymen deserving of such distinction. Our well-known native patriot, Komal Krishna Bahadur, has simply got the title of Rájá; whereas previous to that he was always called Mahárájá by the natives. Government was surely in error in the matter. Now he, Narendra Krishna, and Digamber Mitra might well have been admitted into the second class of the Star of India; for are they not all ornaments to their country? Kristodás Pál, Rájendralál Mitra, Doctor Mahéndralál Sircár, should have been encouraged to still greater exertions by receiving proper titles. Then there are such literary and patriotic men as the famous Ishur Chandra Vidyáságara, Okhoy Kumár Dutta, and others, who are well deserving of honor, but have not received any as yet. We believe Sir Ashley Eden will surely look to this.

SANGHAT
PRABHAKARA.

22. This paper publishes the following communicated article headed, "Mr. Garrett and early marriage."

The evil of early marriage.

After dwelling on some of the evils attending early marriages, he expresses a sincere hope that Messrs. Croft and Garrett's request will meet with due attention and elicit favourable replies from learned men and societies and may prove favourable to their cause.

SAHACHAR,
May 27th, 1878.

23. The *Sahachar* is sorry he cannot assent to Baboo Kristodas Pal's Rent Bill; because, under its provisions, there will either be increased confusion, or the mouths of the cultivators will be shut. We hold to the view supported by some Collectors that, where the zamindar does not directly improve the soil, he is not entitled to an enhancement of rent. The contention of the tenant is that, where the value of the crops increases owing to the contiguity of the railway or the effects of trade, the zamindar is not equitably entitled to a share in the profit. The zamindars, on the other hand, allege that, since they have purchased the land, they are entitled to an increase of rent in case its productive powers, or the value of the crops, increase. This, then, is the essence of the dispute; and it will continue so long as the zamindars remain on the land and do not promote the progress of the cultivators. With respect to the Bill itself, the writer's first objection is to the word "*Bhuswami*" being defined as one entitled to receive rents from the ryot. Is an izardar a *Bhuswami*? The real proprietor alone should be known by that name. The definition of the word "mouzah" is not clear; it should be land ascertained by actual measurement. Sections 3 and 4 do not afford convenience to both parties; for while zamindars may easily apply for an increase of rents, a Collector may not act upon an application of the ryots, unless three-fourths of such as have rights of occupancy in the mouzah unite in the application. In practice this will come to nothing: for, first, it is not probable the peasants will be of one mind, except for creating a disturbance. In the interests of peace, it would not be desirable to induce ignorant people to band together. Again, who will decide whether these three-fourths are actually occupancy ryots? The zamindars may at the outset declare

The Rent Settlement Bill
brought in by Baboo Kristodas
Pal.

they have not those rights. The Collector then must investigate the claims of each ryot, the expense and loss of time in this will necessarily deter tenants from petitioning for a decrease of rent; and as we have no reliable statistics, this third section will be useless. This Bill is altogether unnecessary; it only touches the occupancy ryots, who are able to fight the zamindars, and whose rights many zamindars would seek to destroy. The Bill is like a large net, spread out to catch a large number. On what principle should rents be increased? Section 9 is framed from the clauses of the Bengal Rent Act VIII of 1869, referring to increase of rent. These clauses are not clear; for although thousands of suits have been tried under them, Judges have not yet been able to determine the principle. Is it possible to fix the rent of a whole village at one time? Let us offer an illustration which will enable the Lieutenant-Governor and the legislature to understand our objection. There is a narrow canal running along from Khoordah to Radá, which any traveller by the Eastern Bengal Railway may see as he leaves the Sodpore station. At the flow of the tide the water from the river floods it. The whole plain is scorched; not a grass is to be seen; but the land, measuring about three beegahs, on each side of this canal yields crops even in the month of Bysack; and the question is—Shall the rent of the village be calculated according to this piece of land? No. The rent of each holding should be separately fixed; or wrong will be unavoidable. Again, how are the costs to be determined? With the greatest respect, we would say that even Kristo Dass Baboo as a lawyer would find it impossible to carry out the provisions of section 8. Where a landlord is defeated, at what rate are the tenants to have their costs? or, if the zamindar succeeds, how is he to obtain his costs? In no suit decided in the courts has the time spent by the Judge been taken into calculation as costs. To cast all these costs on the plaintiff is tantamount to destroying him. The law that the tenants can, within three months of the fixing of the rent by the Deputy Collector, bring a suit in a civil court, will only serve to increase the number of suits to no purpose. Would it not be better to appoint a Moonsif, from whose decision the usual appeal to the Judge and the High Court might lie? Is it not better to have that, which has been settled, fixed once for all? This Bill will give fearful powers to the zamindar, and by degrees all rights of occupancy will vanish. On the other hand, we have a body of ryots whose number is large, from whom the zamindars may levy rents as they please. But the present Bill offers no remedy for them. Mr. Eden and every one else know that the zamindars of Behar demand unlimited rent, and a very little throws the tenants into the greatest distress, and under the present system they are never able to lay by anything. Will nothing be done for these? Our advice is that when the Collector sees an indefinite amount of rent demanded, he should with the consent of the local Government fix a certain rate. It is not consistent with reason that when rent is to be increased the Collector's aid should be sought, and that he should be powerless when it is proposed to reduce it. Some good law for the benefit of all should be made with reference to this matter. No doubt the zamindars suffer by the reduction of rent; but would this injure the country? Since they take their tenants' all in payment of rents, if in time of famine they saved them, we should say it were wrong to reduce rents. But, as it is, when they are sucked dry, there is the zamindar; when famine comes there is the treasury, and the poor tenants are helpless; and because they remain quiet, it is no argument to say that their condition should not be improved. They suppress their feelings of distress; but sometimes when they seek a remedy, it leads to breaches of the peace. If a law on the subject must be passed, let it be with reference to such as these, not to occupancy ryots, who can fight their own battles. We

hope that the Legislative Council will not allow these tenants to be brought under the operation of the Bill. Kristodas Baboo has no doubt framed the Bill, keeping the interests of both parties alike in view; but it is in fact a very convenient one for the zamindars alone.

FAMINE.

GRAMVARTA
PRAKASHIKA,
May 29th, 1878.

25. The *Grámvartá Prakashiká* informs its readers that a deputation of cultivators from Dayarampore waited upon the Editor at his office (in Coomercolly), with the view of making known how deeply they suffered from want of food. Their story was heartrending; they had sown all the seed-grain they had, and were starving with their families. They have been in the habit of borrowing grain from the *mahajans* and supporting their families; and, being unable to repay the same, were suffering in consequence. They wanted a loan for two months to enable them to return the grain they had borrowed and procure food. The Editor promised to recommend their case to the favourable consideration of the zamindars.

LOCAL.

BISHWA DUT,
May 29th, 1878.

26. The *Bishwa Dút* complains of the great inconvenience resulting from only one delivery during 24 hours in the Taliganj Post Office, and also of Taliganj being made a subordinate station to Behala, causing a delay of nearly 12 hours by the detention of letters there, after which they are forwarded to the General Post Office, where they are made up into parcels; so that by this method a letter which should reach its destination in one day, scarcely arrives in three. Taliganj is only four miles from Calcutta, and if letters were sent on direct, it would occupy only a few hours. We cannot comprehend the present arrangements of the Post Office. Taliganj is a well-known place of business, has zamindars' cutcherries, a newspaper, and a press whence several publications issue, so that the postal arrangements here should be more satisfactory. The officer in charge admits this. Under the above circumstances, Taliganj, and not Behala, should be the head-quarters of the Suburban post offices; if that cannot be done, it might be made subordinate to Bhawanipore instead of Behala. Kalighat, which is so famous a resort for pilgrims, should have a branch post office, and the sale of stamps should be expedited by locating a stamp-vendor there. A proper pillar-box should be so constructed as to admit of book-parcels in lieu of the present inefficient one. A trial for three months is recommended for these changes, when it would be seen to pay its own expenses, for Kalighat is in every respect a more important place than Behala. If a separate post-master on a high salary cannot be entertained for the present, the branch post office may be placed under the charge of a thana officer.

BHARAT MIHIR,
May 23rd, 1878.

27. A correspondent of the *Bhárat Mihir*, referring to the Sanyal zamindars of Salapgrám, in Serajgunge, notices that, within the past few months, their manager, an European, has plundered two or three villages and put the tenants thereof to a great deal of distress. Some suits which the ryots had instituted have been dismissed.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 1st June 1878.

JOHN ROBINSON,
Government Bengali Translator.